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News Release



For Release on May 16, 2006
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CALIFORNIA SEABIRD RESTORATION PROJECT WEB CAM UP AND RUNNING

See seabirds nesting in their natural habitat

For 11 years the Common Murre Restoration Project (Murre Project) has been restoring seabird colonies on a small seastack known as Devil's Slide Rock (also called Egg Rock by local fishermen), on the San Mateo County coast just 15 miles south of San Francisco.

The Murre Project is a comprehensive seabird restoration effort aimed at enhancing depleted seabird populations along the coast of central California, specifically those of the Common Murre (*Uria aalge*). The Devils Slide breeding colony held close to 3,000 murrelets as recently as the early 1980s but was extirpated as a result of mortality from gill-net fishing and oil spills, notably the *Apex Houston* Oil Spill in 1986. Settlement of the *Apex Houston* Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) case provided funding for restoration of the Devil's Slide Rock murre colony.

To help the Murre Project monitor and research the growing colony and provide public access, two remote-controlled video cameras on Devil's Slide Rock were recently installed with assistance from SeeMore Wildlife Systems. Signals from the cameras are transmitted to the nearby Point Montara Lighthouse Hostel where they are streamed live over the internet. With web hosting support from project partner National Audubon Society, live video of seabirds on the rock is accessible to the general public at <http://www.projectpuffin.org/common-murre.html>. A video screen at the Hostel provides live viewing for guests and visitors. Viewers can follow the nesting season of the murrelets close up along with other seabirds such as Brandt's Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax penicillatus*) and Western Gulls (*Larus occidentalis*).

The Murre Project is administered by the *Apex Houston* Trustee Council (Council), an interagency group with members from FWS, California Department of Fish and Game, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The Murre Project is conducted cooperatively by USFWS-San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, Humboldt State University, National Audubon Society, Carter Biological Consulting, and others.

For more information on the Common Murre Restoration Project and a web cam link, visit <http://www.fws.gov/sfbayrefuges/murre/murrehome.htm>

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.